

National Service Impact in Wisconsin

AmeriCorps

The Western Dairyland Fresh Start program engaged 25 AmeriCorps members in 2012-2013. Members are at-risk young people – high school drop-outs, offenders, low-income, teen parents, with no meaningful work history. Members are involved in construction or rehabbing of homes while they work toward attainment of high school diploma. The members learn positive life skills, pay off restitution, assist other nonprofits through service-learning projects, engage local community members in volunteerism, acquire work skills, and enter post-secondary education. The new house is sold to an income-eligible family. The program had an impressive 92 percent AmeriCorps member retention rate for 2012-2013. Programming for at-risk young people is non-existent in these rural communities, making the work of the Western Dairyland Fresh Start AmeriCorps program even more important.

AmeriCorps NCCC

The mission at Wisconsin Badger Camp is to serve people with developmental disabilities by providing them with a quality outdoor recreational experience. The camp was established in 1966 by a group of parents who believed there was a need for individuals with developmental disabilities to have a place to experience the outdoors. While serving at the Wisconsin Badger Camp, an AmeriCorps NCCC team served as camp counselors for 48 campers for roughly three weeks, performed general camp maintenance, and planned and implemented a weekend respite program. The team learned to plan and hold activities for children, how to best manage behavior, and about the inner workings of a camp.

AmeriCorps VISTA

In its inaugural year of sponsorship, Habitat for Humanity of Wisconsin hosted 17 AmeriCorps VISTA and 16 Summer Associate AmeriCorps VISTA members. Together, they recruited and managed 3,618 community volunteers who volunteered more than 42,000 hours supporting local Habitat for Humanity affiliates. The AmeriCorps VISTA members also generated \$86,911 in cash resources and leveraged another \$461,785 of in-kind donations. These efforts helped enhance the capacity of affiliates to build affordable housing in partnership with low-income families. The 16 affiliates from around Wisconsin who hosted AmeriCorps VISTA members helped nearly 200 families either move in to affordable homeownership or increase the value and livability of their present home.

Senior Corps

In 2013, Dane County RSVP in Madison expanded its Vets Helping Vets program in two areas. In a unique partnership with the VA Hospital, they now offer evening and weekend rides to veterans. Working with the Housing Urban Development/Veteran Affairs Supporting Housing group, RSVP volunteers provide rides to participants to food pantries. A total of 76 veteran drivers provided 2,052 rides to older Vets and their spouses (age 60 and older), and 233 rides to Vets younger than 60 and their spouses through September 2013. One client stated, "Without this service I would be lost. There are days that I come home from an appointment and can barely walk. I feel this service helps keep me independent."

Social Innovation Fund

Partnering with Social Innovation Fund (SIF) intermediary Jobs for the Future, the National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS) is expanding its targeted training and technical assistance to at least 23,000 low-income individuals while also addressing the critical skill needs of more than 1,000 employers throughout the state with two nonprofit collaborators, Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance/Donors Forum of Wisconsin and Workforce Central/Encourage Community Foundation. Through an initial subgrant totaling \$1 million over two years from Jobs for the Future, which will be matched dollar-for-dollar with nonfederal funds, the Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance intends to assist almost 3,970 job seekers, placing 840 in jobs. Over the two-year grant period they will also serve 840 incumbent workers, helping 580 workers to receive wage increases. Workforce Central will serve 320 job seekers, placing 150 of these people in jobs as well as assist 1,100 incumbent workers receive additional training and education helping 435 of them garner wage increases.